

Physically distant, socially close, self-care: learnings responses to novel corona times

Why mitigation

Whether you're young or old, YOU can help slow the spread of the virus and save lives. Slowing the spread means safeguarding healthcare and critical infrastructure so its available for those with dire need. Taking action even if you are healthy means reducing spread to people at increased risk, whether grand parents or people in your community with various underlying health conditions.

Mitigation strategies

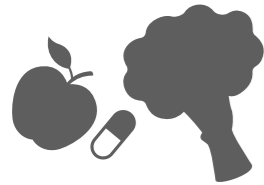
A variety of resources (last page) have information on hygiene, home preparedness. Follow them. My focus is on the practices of 'social distancing'...which is really a poor name, given that we're social creatures and need human connection—even if not physical—now more than ever. Below I share distillations from readings on how we might thrive under the challenging conditions of self-quarantine and / or limited community movement.

Expectation management

The weeks and months ahead will be challenging, but that doesn't mean they have to be miserable. Knowing what social distancing and (voluntary) self-quarantine may entail is a great first step to being prepared and setting yourself up for a (possibly even) personally rewarding response to these trying times

Activities and behaviors to aid with difficult emotions

Restricted movement and interruption of routines; separation from friends and loved ones may contribute to elevated feelings of anxiety, loneliness, boredom, frustration, or uncomfortable uncertainty — whether related to your health, your ability to support yourself and others; the health of loved ones and friends, and the well-being of your community



Ensure you have the essentials you need to thrive

- help reduce anxiety and prepare for restricted movement by ensuring you have the medications, toiletries, provisions, entertainment sources you need not only to survive, but to thrive (but don't hoard, please)



Seek credible information; educate yourself and others

- help reduce anxiety and uncomfortable uncertainty by building a clearer understanding of where to go to learn about a changing situation. Many sites now offer free live updates



Plan to stay connected with friends and loved ones

- help reduce loneliness, boredom, and anxiety by reaching out to people you care about and who care about you; don't be afraid to talk about the emotions and experience of these trying times. But also enjoy the conversations and new memories you're making together!
- use a range of media, from text and cell to web-enabled platforms



Care for your mental and physical health

- help reduce boredom and frustration by doing things you enjoy, especially after demanding tasks. Consider journaling things you've been grateful for during these trying times
- remember to take deep breaths, stretch, exercise, and take movement breaks from sitting

Strategies for stress management

Many tried-and-true methods for reducing levels of stress may help you in this situation. YOU can use this opportunity to practice stress management techniques that will serve you for the rest of your life

Create new routines and habits

- reflect on whether the activities and habits you have are serving you well
- adjust your activities and experiment with new routines and habits—when you take brakes, how you reward yourself, how often you change tasks, what kind of tasks you take on at different points of the day, etc.

Be mindful of your news intake

- even if you find excellent sources of news, taking in too much or all the time, like anything we consume, may not sit well. Consider only checking at certain times of day, or for certain amounts of time—for example, before lunch and / or at the end of the work day before a fun activity

Reach out to friends near, but also far

- many of your friends will be undergoing somewhat similar experiences of either self-quarantine and / or limited community movement. Reach out! See how they're doing! Share strategies and ideas or even how it's going for you!
- share things that bring you joy and make you smile and LAUGH!

Care for your mind and body

- manage your expectations for what you may achieve while home, and communicate with people whom you may need to discuss adjusting expectations.
- eat healthfully and mindfully
- remember to rest, unwind, and enjoy
- stay vigilant of warning signs related to changes in appetite, energy, difficulty concentrating, physical aches, rapid changes in emotional state

Tips for working from home



Be sure you have the technology and software you need

Manage your expectations

- Focus on your priorities
- Confirm how you'll be interacting with teams
- Maintain open lines of honest, good-willed communication about what is or is not working



Use your self-knowledge to your advantage (e.g., of your work-from-home weaknesses)

- If you need routine, dress for work
- Set times for activities and breaks
- Keep something like normal hours
- Embrace video channels and chats for the informal communication you might be missing

Take advantage of working from home!

- You're likely not having to commute
- You're likely saving money on lunch
- You may be getting more time with family
- You can diversify what you do in your breaks



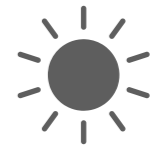
Tips for staying physically apart but socially connected

Schedule times to eat meals, share tea and coffee, or a drink over virtual media like FaceTime, Skype, Zoom, WhatsApp, etc.



Chat intermittently with people throughout the day

Check-in on friends and loved ones and let them know you're available to check-in



Use the time with intentionality—when you break, when you eat, when you check the news or email, when you cook and what, how often you stretch, and so much more!

Appreciate the solitude, too! It's a chance to slow down, start new projects, practice hobbies, and learn new things

Your turn!

What are your aspirations for how you want to share this time with yourself and others? Take some time to think about what you might like to do...dust off old books you've wanted to read, podcasts you've wanted to hear, crafts you've wanted to start, games you've wanted to play, tasks you've wanted to complete, people you've wanted to reconnect with...the present is always a gift: enjoy.

Your turn (continued)!

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Here's some space where you can start thinking about your self care in novel corona times.

	What do you want to do, try, or be aware of?	How will you do this, try this, or stay aware of this?	Who can you lean on to help, how, and what other strategies could you use (like timers, and rewarding breaks)?
Ensuring essentials			
Information diet			
Connecting with loved ones and friends			
Caring for your mental health			
Caring for your physical health			
Adapting to working from home			
Managing expectations			
Managing stress			
New things!			

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References and resources:

Purpose of mitigation strategies

- CDC Community Mitigation Strategies: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/index.html>
- Observable Consequences of waiting: <https://observablehq.com/@yurivish/dont-be-italy>
- Medium Consequences of waiting: <https://medium.com/@tomaspuero/coronavirus-act-today-or-people-will-die-f4d3d9cd99ca>

Types of mitigation strategies

- CDC steps to protect yourself: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/prevention.html>
- CDC Manage Anxiety & Stress: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/managing-stress-anxiety.html>
- CDC Caring for emotional health: <https://emergency.cdc.gov/coping/selfcare.asp>

Expectations of mitigation strategies

- Lancet: psychological impact of quarantine: [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(20\)30460-8/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(20)30460-8/fulltext)

Coping mechanisms

- NPR Make Working from Home Work for You: <https://www.npr.org/2020/03/15/815549926/8-tips-to-make-working-from-home-work-for-you?t=1584375408693>
- NPR Coronavirus and Parenting: <https://www.npr.org/2020/03/13/814615866/coronavirus-and-parenting-what-you-need-to-know-now>
- The Atlantic Socializing during a quarantine: <https://www.theatlantic.com/family/archive/2020/03/coronavirus-quarantine-socializing/608020/>
- Becoming minimalist: practice resting (shout out to friend for this ref): <https://www.becomingminimalist.com/resting/?fbclid=IwAR1e-QxPSQhvSs0xFnZm6gPYPQqLo-nFhdSWLqgLrbDK9VnkHc2sDugROyQ>

Compendia

<https://coronavirustechhandbook.com/>

Resources for parents

https://docs.google.com/document/d/e/2PACX-IvR0gzeXQLzKi739PYsBm2y8-M5LG7t12F2dBW4S8_IYSK9IPhF40Ra3STI-UsjVW0IS-00qE6_6G5JTB/pub

Daily news aggregator

<https://cronyclecovid19.substack.com/p/covid-19-160320-catching-up-170845>